

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 NIC-01 ACDA-19 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07

H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 237

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT PFOR KS JA

SUBJECT: NATIONAL ASSEMBLY INTERPELLATION ON KIM TAE-CHUNG CASE

SUMMARY: AS PREDICTED, PRO-GOVERNMENT SPEAKERS IN NATIONAL ASSEMBLY INTERPELLATIONS ON KIM TAE-CHUNG CASE FOCUSED ON ANTI-JAPANESE THEMES. THEY ALSO SURFACED POSSIBILITY KIM TAE-CHUNG MAY BE GUILTY OF CRIMES AGAINST THE STATE. FOR HIS PART, PRIME MINISTER'S APPROACH HAS BEEN ONE OF STUDIES MODERATION, PARTICULARLY AS REGARDS GOJ. AT SAME TIME, HE AND OTHER MINISTERS HAVE LEFT THE DOOR OPEN TO INVESTIGATION OF KIM'S ALLEGED ANTI-STATE ACTIVITY ABROAD. OPPOSITION QUESTIONER KIM YONG-SAM ACCUSED GOVERNMENT OF "POLITICAL TERRORISM" AND SUPPRESSING DEMOCRACY AND DEMANDED THAT GOVERNMENT CONCLUDE INVESTIGATION SATISFACTORILY AND SPEEDILY.

1. TWO PRO-GOVERNMENT MEMBERS, ONE OPPOSITION REPRESENTATIVE AND ONE INDEPENDENT QUESTIONED GOVERNMENT ABOUT KIM TAE-CHUNG CASE DURING NATIONAL ASSEMBLY INTERPELLATIONS SEPTEMBER 22 AND 24. REVITALIZATION GROUP (RG) REPRESENTATIVES KIM YONG-SONG SEPT. 22

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AND SHIN HYONG-SIK SEPT 24 BOTH RESTATED IN

EMOTIONAL TERMS LONG HISTORY OF JAPANESE MISDEEDS AGAINST KOREA. SPEAKERS INTER ALIA ALLEGED JAPANESE HAD NO BUSINESS OBJECTING TO ANY VIOLATIONS OF SOVEREIGNTY BY KOREANS IN VIEW OF PAST JAPANESE ACTIONS.

2. A SECOND THEME IN BOTH RG MEMEBRS' QUESTIONS WAS ACCUSATION THAT KIM TAE-CHUNG WAS GUILTY OF "CRIMES AGAINST THE STATE AND NATION" BY HIS ACTIVITIES ABROAD. THEY ALLEGED KIM HAD ADVOCATED WITHDRAWAL OF US TROOPS AND SUSPENSION OF US MILITARY AID AND JAPANESE ECONOMIC AID TO THE ROK AND HAD SUPPORTED KIM IL-SONG'S PROPOSAL FOR A CONFEDERATION OF SOUTH AND NORTH KOREA.

3. IN HIS REPLIES, PRIME MINISTER KIM CHONG-PIL GAVE AN IMPRESSION OF STUDIED MODERATION. HE MADE THE FOLLOWING POINTS:

A. UNFAIR STATEMENTS BY JAPANESE PRESS AND POLITICIANS DO NOT REPRESENT POSITION OF JAPANESE GOVERNMENT;

B. ROKG IS NOT CONSIDERING SENDING KIM TAE-CHUNG TO JAPAN;

C. KIDNAPPING INDEED REVEALED LAXITY IN ROK'S COASTAL DEFENSES;

D. KIM TAE-CHUNG IS BEING PROTECTED AS A VICTIM, NOT DETAINED AS A SUSPECT; AND

E. GOVERNMENT HAS HEARD STORIES ABOUT KIM TAE-CHUNG'S ACTIVITIES ABROAD BUT HAS NOT INVESTIGATED. PRIMIN SAID ACCUSATIONS, IF TRUE, WOULD CONSTITUTE A "SERIOUS CRIME AGAINST THE STATE".

4. OPPOSITION NEW DEMOCRATIC PARTY REPRESENTATIVE KIM YONG-SAM IN HIS INTERPELLATION SEPTEMBER 24 LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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CITED KIM TAE-CHUNG CAS AS AN EXAMPLE OF "TERRORIST POLITICS" OF PARK REGIME. HE COMPARED INCIDENT TO ACID-THROWING INCIDENT WHICH HE SUFFERED IN 1969 AND WHICH REMAINS UNSOLVED. HE SAID PUBLIC DESERVES A SPEEDY AND PLAUSIBLE EXPLANATION OF KIDNAPPING. HE DESCRIBED PERIODIC REPORTS BY MINISTER OF JUSTICE ON INVESTIGATION INTO KIM CASE AS LUDICROUS AND CONTEMPTUOUS OF PUBLIC OPINION. HE POINTED OUT

THAT NORTH KOREA, USING INCIDENT AS A EXCUSE, HAD
SUSPENDED SOUTH-NORTH DIALOGUE, "WIPING OUT HOPES
FOR THE UNIFICATION WHICH HAD BEEN USED TO JUSTIFY
THE OCTOBER INCIDENT" (I.E. OCTOBER REVITALIZATION).

5. KIM YONG-SAM ASKED WHETHER KIM TAE-CHUNG WOULD BE
FREE TO ENGAGE IN POLITICS AFTER INVESTIGATION IS
COMPLETED. TO THIS, PRIME MINISTER REPLIED ONLY
THAT "CURRENT RESTRICTIONS" ON KIM TAE-CHUNG WOULD
END WHEN INVESTIGATION WAS COMPLETED.

6. DURING HIS COMMENTS, INFORMATION MINISTER
YUN CHU-YONG ASSERTED THAT ROK PRESS AND "VOLUNTARILY
REFRAINED FROM PRINTING ANYTHING OTHER THAN OFFICIAL REPORTS
" ON KIM INCIDENT AFTER THEY REALIZED THE
GRAVITY OF THE CASE. YUN DESCRIBED A DEMAND BY
KIM YONG-SONG FOR EXPULSION OF ALL JAPANESE REPORTERS
AS "TOO EXTREME". HE SAID ROKG WOULD FIRST WARN
THEM AND WOULD EXPEL THEM ONLY IF THEY PERSISTED
IN PRINTING DISTORTIONS.

7. COMMENT: ASSEMBLY INTERPELLATION
HAS DEVELOPED ALONG PREDICTED LINES. AT DIRECTION
OF THE GOVT. RG SPEAKERS HAVE FOCUSED SOLELY ON ANTI-
JAPANESE AND ANTI-KIM TAE-CHUNG THEMES IN
EMOTIONAL, EXCESSIVE FASHION INVITING DISBELIEF. FOR HIS PART,
PRIMIN KIM HAS BEEN RESTRAINED, AVOIDING DIRECT
CRITICISM OF GOJ AND MUTING EXCESSES OF PRO-GOVT
PARLIAMENTARIANS. HOWEVER, PRIMIN WAS EQUIVOCAL
ABOUT ULTIMATE DISPOSITION OF KIM CASE, INCLUDING
KIM'S ALLEGED ANTI-STATE CRIMES.

8. KIM YONG-SAM'S INTERPELLATION WAS SURPRISINGLY
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FORTHRIGHT IN CONTRAST TO LINE TAKEN BY GOVT
SPEAKERS. INTERPELLATION ON KIM TAE-CHUNG CASE
CONCLUDES SEPT. 25 WITH QUESTIONS BY ONE NDP AND
TWO DRP SPEAKERS.
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